/40 cont./

302 184 Furthermore, it has been documented for the Waikâ (207) (208),

207. Koch-Grünberg, 1917, p. 198.

208. Zerries, 1954b, p. 75.

Karime (209), and the Xiriâna men on the Motomotô (210). With

209. Salathé, 1931/32, p. 305.

210. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 306.

regard to the latter, Koch-Grünberg points out that in this case it is a male hair style (210) /see footnote above/. In the same work he goes on to describe the tonsure of a Karaiben woman: "The oldest woman on the Roroima had a strange hair style. Except for a narrow wreath of longer hair all around her head, which was cut in the customary fashion over the forehead, the head hair was cut short, like a monk's tonsure. (Cf. Vol. VI, Plate 86). I was unable to discover the reason for this differing hair style" (211). The remarks which Alexander von Humboldt devotes

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211. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 27.

to this Indian hair style are also worthy of mention (212).

212. A. von Humboldt, 1860, IV, p. 319.

●304 f) Deforming facial ornamentation

The male as well as the female sex among the Surára and Pakidái have pierced ear-lobes -- nhimekakeká -- (Surára), -- nimukakuká -- (Pakidái), a perforation of the lower lip -- husekahá --, and, in addition, the women have such in the corners of the mouth -- kaskehá.

304 301 The perforations are already made in babyhood (see p.135). The men use them primarily as a place for feather ornaments (see p. 93). They sometimes also wear as ear ornaments, however,

Surára Pakidái

/40 cont./

304 301 small pieces of reed 1-2 centimeters long, from which hang, on one or two short chains of beads, small triangular pieces of silver leaf, shiny silver coins, or particularly large glass beads. Women also have a special preference for these objects. The teeth of the cutia (Dasyprocta aguti L.) -- tomenáke --, which the men use as a knife (see p.115, are a typical feminine ear ornament. [314] To prevent them from slipping out of the perforation, a small lump of tree resin is stuck on the back end. The perforations of the ear lobes are also adorned now and then with blossoms.

In the perforations of the lower lip and the corners of the mouth on either side the women now and again have delicate little reed rods -- tunhabaścre -- 15-17 and 12-15 centimeters long, respectively. [184] Among the Xiriána women married to Surára and Pakidái men I observed that they wear, in addition, two little reed rods 30-35 centimeters long in the pierced nasal septum -- huxibéka -- (Ill. 16). This piercing I was told is reserved for only the female members of this large, mighty tribe. [184] This also explains why the perforations of the Puseheweterí and Aramamesterí women correspond perfectly to those of their Surára and Pakidái "sisters," that is to say, there is no piercing of the nasal septum. The same applies for Nikeromá, the little captive from the hostile tribe of the Karauaterí.

301 422 All the ornamental objects named are made by the male and female wearers themselves and are regarded as personal property.

304 301 184 Due to Koch-Grünberg's research among the Xiriána (Schirianá), Waiká (Waíka), and various Karaíben /Carib/ tribes, abundant comparative and supplementary material is available to me. Thus, the great investigator writes with regard to the [171] Xiriána (Schirianá): "Nasal septum, /41/ ear lobes, and lower [127] lip were pierced among the men and in many cases adorned with little reed rods almost as long as a hand. On special occasions they also wear a jaguar tooth in the lower lip.

"The women had long reed rods in the pierced ear-lobes, the lower lip, and the corners of the mouth. Three narrow strips of reed, spread out fan-shaped at both ends, adorned the nasal septum (Ill. 12)" (213).

213. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 306.

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/41 cont./

This confirms the statements of my informants, who said that a perforation of the nasal septum was characteristic for the Xiriâna. For the male and female Waikâ, too, there is confirmation of nose, ear, and lower-lip rods, and, in the case of women, such in the corners of the mouth (214).

214. Koch-Grünberg, 1917, pp. 198-200.

As for the use of nose-rods, it seems to be a privilege of the two hostile "great ones" (see p. 12), for their lesser allies do not use them.

The other perforations, however, are the same among all the Yanonâmi tribes mentioned, but it should be pointed out that pierced corners of the mouth are found only among women.

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With reference to the Karaiben Arekumâ-Taulipang, Koch-Grünberg writes: "Ear lobes and lower lip are pierced, and in the case of some men the nasal septum as well" (215). According

215. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 28.

to that, the perforation of the nasal septum is reserved for only the men, and perforations of the corners of the mouth are entirely absent. In the ear lobes, however, male as well as female members of the tribe likewise wear little reed rods with one or two short chains of beads hanging down, to which are fastened silver coins and crescent-shaped or triangular pieces of silver leaf (216). The latter are the same type of objects that I found

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216. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 28.
Plate 5 (6).

as ornaments among the Surâra and Pakidâi (see p. 85 and Ill. 9 /see p. 270/. Therefore, in this case, too, an adoption from the Karaiben, directly or indirectly, seems to be indicated. In reply to my question about the origin of these ornamental objects, the Xiriâna were mentioned, to be sure, but they for their part certainly

/41 cont./

301 as far as Guiana; the Tapuya on the eastern horn of South
171 America remain isolated. The pattern of distribution coincides
301 in essential features with the multiple perforations of the upper
304 lip (these parts also merge into each other very much anatomi-
171 cally) and clearly rests on Andean prototypes" (222). The

222. Menzel, 1957, p. 33.

characteristic mouth-corner rods of the Yanonámi women may well fit into this area of distribution, but not in connection with perforations of the upper /42/ lip, for here instead of the latter, the lower lip is pierced.

304 g) Tattooing
[881] All women and girls have pin-point tattooing over the upper lip, which extends downward on either side of the mouth (Ills. 19 and 24) and is punctured on the girls during the first menstrua-
[192] tion (see p. 66) (223). The designation for this among the Surára

[184]

223. This tattooing is also found among the female Xiriána, Puseheweterí, and Aramamesterí who are married to Surára and Pakidái men. The little captive of the Surára, Nikeromá, from the hostile tribe of the Karauaterí is an exception. She assured me, however, that in her maloka the girls are also tattooed. But she had fallen into the hands of the Surára before her first menstruation, and the tattooing was not put on her here. If later, however, she is married by a Surára man, the pin-point design must subsequently be punctured on her.

is -- uarabakoxfk -- and among the Pakidái -- uarabakoxfbe.
[824] These words are derived from the name for the genipap fruit --
[386] uarabá --, the juice of which is used for puncturing the dots.

/42 cont./

●304 For the Karaiben /Carib/ and Aruak /Arawak/ women of
171 Guiana, however, a puncture-tattooing in the mouth region is also characteristic, and occasionally one finds it even among male Karaiben. In this case, too, it is regarded as a sign of maturity and usually has a magical significance. The punctured patterns, however, differ entirely from those of the Surára and Pakidái. Among the Makuxí /Macusi/ they consist of numerous short, vertical, parallel lines, and the Arekuná-Taulipang /Arecuna/ prefer dots, dashes, and fishhook patterns (224). The

224. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 45; Pl. 12 (3-16).

latter motifs have also been confirmed for the women of the Wapixana /Wapishana/ (225) (226) and other Aruak tribes in

225. Appun, 1871, p. 523.

226. Farabee, 1918, p. 82, Fig. 9.

British Guiana as well as Surinam (227) (228).

227. Richard Schomburgk, 1847, p. 226.

228. Joest, 1893, p. 83 and Ill. a and b.

304 There are also slight differences with regard to the time of
171 tattooing. The Surára and Pakidái carry it out during the first
881 menstruation, the Arekuná-Taulipang and Makuxí, on the other
[184] hand, shortly before the onset of it, and, to be sure, in connection with the ant torture (229).

229. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 128.

2: Becher--91 E-5 (1955-1956) 1960 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18
Surára
Pakidái

/42 cont./

304 824 386 412 177 The former use the juice of the genipap fruit as coloring matter, the latter the ashes of burned honey bees (229) /see footnote p. 90/. The original instrument everywhere for the puncturing of the dots was a palm thorn. Koch-Grünberg, however, also saw the use of pointed fragments of glass among the above-mentioned Karaiben (230).

230. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 45.

304 174 171 114 A decision about whether the tattooings in the mouth region developed independently among the aforementioned Yanonámi, Karaiben, and Aruak tribes or whether they were brought about by reciprocal or outside influences cannot be reached as yet, although Koch-Grünberg saw a young Xiriána woman who had the fishhook and dot tattooing of the Arekuná-Taulipang painted on her face (231). This may have been an exception, however,

231. Koch-Grünberg, 1923a, p. 305.

for, strangely enough, he did not find any further tattooing among the Xiriána.

[179] The designs of the Surára and Pakidái also seem to be more primitive than the basic motifs of the Karaiben and Aruaken in the form of fishhooks, which clearly point to borrowings from civilization. Moreover, the fact that among the Karaiben tribes of Guiana individual men and boys are tattooed in the region of the mouth leads one to conclude that there has been a leveling of this custom. For probably there, too, it was formerly reserved for only the women, just as it is today among the Surára and Pakidái.

In conclusion, reference is to be made to P. Schmidt and Nordenskiöld, from whom there are already available brief, summary studies about puncture-tattooing in South America. The first-named author differentiates two groups, which are reserved for men and women or only for women, respectively, and regards a western origin as probable (232). /43/ On the other

/43 cont./

304 174 171 114

232. P. Schmidt, 1913, pp. 1083/84.

hand, Nordenskiöld represents the view that puncture-tattooing "could rather easily have been discovered in various places." His map of distribution shows a concentration of this custom in the northern and central parts of South America (233). A com-

233. Nordenskiöld, 1918, pp. 128-130 and Map 19.

prehensive study on the tattooing of South American Indians would definitely produce worthwhile and informative results.

301 h) Painting

The body painting which is applied on ceremonial occasions, war expeditions, and occasionally also hunting expeditions is [531] very simple and artless. Either it consists of constantly recurring motifs, such as serpentine lines, circles and dots (234), which

234. The implements are also painted with these motifs.

are applied sometimes singly, sometimes mixed, or the entire body is rubbed with red or black coloring matter.

[824] [386] For the red coloring matter, there is urucú -- narã --, a paste which is prepared from the red berries of Bixa orellana. Blue color is furnished by the seeds of the genipap fruit (Genipa brasiliensis) -- uarabã --, whereas for black coloring matter the soot scraped off cooking pots is used, usually mixed with a little genipap.

[413] The serpentine lines, circles, and dots are applied with the fingers or a wooden stick, and for diffused coloring a little ball of cotton is used.

/63 cont./

854 593 It is simply touching to see how lovingly and solicitously every mother treats her child. But the love of the father is no less great. He openly acknowledges the child and clearly shows his feelings of pride and fatherliness (318), though he is otherwise

[114] [191] 318. In contrast to this, Alexander von Humboldt, with reference to the Indians on the Orinoco, writes that fathers do not have any affection for their children (A. von Humboldt, 1860, III, p. 155).

very reserved in his expressions of feeling. When he comes wearily into the communal house after a strenuous hunting expedition or from his field work, he never forgets to devote himself first of all to his little child for a while. He either takes it on his arm and goes walking with it, or he lays it beside him in the hammock. Even during migrations of the tribe he sometimes [858] carries the child for hours. Moreover, he loves a daughter just as much as a son.

854 ● 304 During the first year of life the ear lobes and the lower lips of boys and girls are pierced by the mother with a sharp palm thorn, and, in addition, the girls are given perforations in the corners of the mouth. To prevent the wounds from healing, small wooden rods are stuck in temporarily and moved back and forth 304 frequently.

854 833 When a little girl has completed the first year of life, she is deflowered by the mother with her finger. This procedure is done in preparation for sexual intercourse later on.

114 191 854 833 304 Similar procedures were observed by von Feldner among the Machacarí /Mashacali/ Indians, and he describes them as follows: "Nulla inter illas invenitur virgo, quia mater inde a tenera aetate filiae maxima cum cura omnem vaginae constrictionem ingredimentumque amovere studet hoc quidem modo: manui dextrae imponitur folium arboris in infundibuli formam redactum, et dum index, in partes genitales immissus huc et illud movetur, per infundibulum aqua tepida immittitur" (319). In this connection

319. von Feldner, 1828, II, p. 149, footnote.

/63 cont./

114 171 854 833 304 Ploss and Bartels have already observed: "These manipulations probably serve not so much the purpose of cleanliness as preparation for the later sexual functions" (320).

320. Ploss and Bartels, 1927, p. 376.

171 304 854 A custom which is said to prevail in Paraguay should be mentioned in this connection. When a girl is born there, the midwife inserts her finger into the vagina and says: This is a woman (321). Unfortunately, there is no account of the origin

321. Written communication from Montegazza to Ploss (Ploss, 1912, p. 219).

of this custom. It is possible that it was taken over from Indians, because in Paraguay the Indian population is, of course, numerically the largest.

Among most South American tribes for whom there is evidence of an artificial destruction of the hymen, however, chiefly those of the Tukano /Tucano/ and Pano linguistic families, but also some of the Aruaken /Arawak/ and Tupi, it is done for ritualistic purposes at the onset of puberty (322).

322. Fuchs, 1956, pp. 79-81.

Among the Totonaken /Totonac/ in Mexico it is one of the duties of two priests to destroy with their fingers the hymen of female babies 28-29 days after birth. At the same time they ordered the mothers to repeat the defloration six years later with their fingers (323). Strebel regards this procedure as a castigation rite,

323. Krickeberg, 1918-1922, p. 47.

corresponding to the circumcision of male infants, which was also carried out by the priests. "Even the child was to pay its tribute to the gods, /64/ and the fact that the sexual parts were chosen for

/64 cont./
this is likewise understandable, considering their significance, though the least possible loss of blood may also have been a consideration" (324).

324. Strebel, 1885, p. 13.

On the other hand, with regard to the Surára and Pakidái it should be noted that there is no circumcision of boys among them and the defloration of small girls unequivocally serves for later sexual intercourse; there are no religious motives or hygienic reasons connected with it. Whether this was different in former times neither the chiefs nor older men and women were able to say (325a).

325a. It is an interesting fact that among the Itälmen on Kamchatka little girls are deflowered at a very tender age by their mothers in the same manner as among the Surára and Pakidái and for the same reason (Stellers, 1774, p. 346).

This type of body deformation has been documented for China and Indonesia too. It is done there, however, for hygienic purposes, in order to remove the mucus which gathers in the genitalia (Ploss, 1912, pp. 218/19).

It should be mentioned further that all Surára and Pakidái fathers often touch the vulva of their small daughters with the mouth and gently suck on it.

If a man has two or more wives, they help each other in caring for a baby. The grandmother, a sister, or the eldest daughter are also loving helpers. Infant care, of course, does not require much trouble, for regular baths are unknown. It is only when the crust of dirt is a little too thick that the mother washes it off a bit when she goes to fetch water from the river. The infrequent washing has the advantage that the skin is more nearly invulnerable to mosquito bites. If the child's nose is not

Surára
Pakidái

/66 cont./

595 The Surára chief has two wives, a third one died, and the Pakidái chief, who is still comparatively young, has one. Various other men also have two or more wives. If the husband dies, these women, without being able to decide for themselves, are taken on, along with their children, by one of his brothers, the younger one as a rule, even if he is already married.

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835 Bachelors have the right to sexual intercourse with the wives of their older brothers, and thus the children of these women do not call them uncle, but likewise father.

881 h) Puberty rites for girls

At nine to ten years old, the Surára and Pakidái children have already reached maturity, which is probably related to the fact that these Indians live in the hot, humid rain forests of the equatorial zone. There are no initiation rites for boys. A girl, [302] on the other hand, at the onset of her first period, is kept isolated in a circular pen 3-4 meters in diameter, which is erected a short distance from the maloka; her entire body is painted with urucú, a red plant pigment. Here the little one must sit motionless and receives only once a day from her mother a calabash of banana soup and a second one of water. In the evening she is brought into the communal house, so that she can lie down to sleep there, but neither parents and siblings nor other members of the tribe may 881 speak to her. The next morning she is put back in the pen. During the second day her mother or another woman applies a pin- ●304 point tattoo above her upper lip, which extends downward on either [413] side of the mouth to the chin. The tattooing instrument is a [824] pointed thorn of the pupunha palm. This is dipped into the dirty- [386] gray juice of the genipap fruit, which, after the skin is punctured, leaves a dark blue dot. This procedure is extremely painful for the [147] little girls. Yet they bear it with passive faces, suppress their tears, and do not utter a sound. With this tattooing, all the evil, mysterious forces which are in the menstrual blood, and which might bring danger to the husband, are banished for the rest of a woman's life.

881 With the second onset of the period, too, a girl is again isolated, and after that a small celebration takes place.

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Ill: 19. Yaxoíma, daughter of the war chief of the Surára, with characteristic facial tattooing

Ill. 20. Yaxoíma (left) and Rokoahíma, two Surára girls

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Ill. 21. Jibeauwõ, my little interpreter (right), and Mauahemá (two orphan boys from the tribe of the Surára)

Ill. 22. Two Surára boys. Xaniwõ (right) and Mauahemá, who holds a monkey bladder between his leg

2: Bechez--274 E-5 (1955-1956) 1960 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

Surára
Pakidái

/9/

Ill. 23. The Surára boy Xaniwõ

Ill. 24. Pakidái woman, Riopemí

Ill. 25. The two oldest Surára women: Rokomá (right and Cinapemí

Ill. 26. Hammock of embira

Ill. 27. Liana hammock

Ill. 28. Plaited hammock of cotton

4: Wilbert--77 E-4, 5 (1958) 1963 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

Waica

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[304]

A Waica girl of the upper Orinoco. The little sticks are held in perforations of the lips.

Courtesy: Luciano Scamuzzi

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304 All have the ears pierced. A good number of men and women also have the center of the lower lip pierced. Some women have the corners of the mouth pierced, and a few have the nose pierced.

304 The boys and men wear sticks through their ears, sometimes
301 feathers or also little sticks with feathers. Those who have the lip pierced keep a little stick or a feather there all the time.

The women wear flowers or leaves in their ears. The perforations in the lips and the nose generally have sticks in them. On gala occasions, the little stick which goes through the nasal septum may be as long as the face is wide.

301 In addition to the cords tied around the waist, they frequently
291 wear similar cords around the arms and legs.

The men may also wear a heavy cotton belt and similar bands on a smaller scale on the arms. They may wear feathers fixed on the shoulders and a monkey tail around the head, to emphasize the border of hair, or they may adorn the hair with down.

The women also use a heavy cotton belt, clearly different from the one which the men use.

Girls wear a band at the waist, woven of cotton, with decorations on its front part. They also customarily cross the chest with bands of cotton.

302 Onoto, charcoal, and several other paints are used for body
53 designs. They do not seem to have any religious meaning, but
[386] simply an ornamental purpose. These designs include dots, stripes, wavy lines, and circles. Sometimes they paint a wide strip and then make the design by scraping off the paint. They also imprint upon the skin /455/ ornamental designs by using a "mapire" or the hand, or some combination of these. It seems that some of them have their favorite designs.

Hides, Textiles, and Weaving

237 The skin of the jaguar or of another mammal rarely reaches the settlement in a single piece. But even if it did, it is immediately cut into small pieces so that each one may have a little piece to cover his quiver, or at least a band to wear tied to the arm.

9:Grelier K-5 (1951) 1957 SQ18 Yanoama SQ 18
Waica

It was on July 15th that we encountered our first Waïkas. We were sailing close under the left bank during the late afternoon when we heard hoarse cries near by. Two naked Indians with faces and bodies painted violet showed themselves among the trees. With excited gestures and brandishing their bows, they motioned us to come closer.

" *Shori ! Shori !* " they shouted.

" *Shori ! Shori !* " we repeated and held up machetes for them to see.

By the time we had found a suitable landing-place on the bank the two had become six—six young men laughing, shouting and jostling each other excitedly. All were painted. While we were still making fast, they plunged into the water and hoisted themselves aboard. We gave them machetes and *manioc* and they gave us bows and arrows in return. Judging from the way they fingered our clothes, boots and beards we must have appeared very peculiar creatures to them. All the time they kept saying " *Shori ! Shori !* " and we responded as in a litany, " *Shori !* "

Physically the Waïka is no different from the Guaharibo. He has the same stocky body and contrasting thin legs. His hair is cut monk-fashion with the top of the head shaven. He wears no clothes but a string of forest cotton which serves as a belt and keeps his privy member tied upwards by means of a knot round the prepuce. On his arms above the elbow he wears a bangle of tightly woven cotton, monkey's fur or bird's skin. His ears are pierced to take ear-rings of reed. Sometimes a bunch of different coloured parakeet's feathers, or toucan's feathers, is used for this purpose. Occasionally he will wear a belt of cotton threads died with ochre. At first we thought this to be a badge of rank or authority, but later we saw so many of these garments and they were offered so readily as barter that we had to revise this idea. Another frequent form of adornment is the pelt of a capuchin monkey worn on the head like a tiara. And all of these ornaments, besides bows and arrows, were freely offered to us in exchange for knives, necklaces and matches.

The bow is the Waïka's only weapon. Made of strong,

415 clay pots are rapidly being replaced by aluminum ware sup-
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177 plied to the few villages in contact with foreigners. These
[139] aluminum pots enter the exchange networks and ultimately
[138] reach virtually every village, as do machetes, axes, knives, glass beads, and fishhooks.

291 Clothing for men is limited to cotton strings around the wrist, ankles, knees, and waist; the foreskin of the penis is tied to the waist string. Occasionally men wear a string around their upper torso that crosses at both the chest and the back, and a thick cotton belt, circular in
301 cross-section, around the waist. Scalps of wild turkeys are
237 worn as fore-arm bands, to which are tied clusters of feathers
[304] that dangle from a string a foot or so in length. Men perforate the lower lip and the ear lobes; they wear a small feather in the lip and short pieces of arrow cane through their ear lobes, occasionally embellished with colored
302 feathers. Both sexes cover their bodies with red pigment and shave the tops of their heads, the latter being more common
[64] among the women. The men shave the tops of their heads to
[59] display their numerous scalp wounds, evidence of fierceness in club fights.

291 Younger women wear a cotton waist band, thick cotton armbands, circular in cross-section, a harness of cotton strings on their upper torso that crosses between the breasts and at the back, and single strings around their ankles and
[304] below their knees. Women pierce their ear lobes, the corners
[301] of their mouth, lower lip, and nasal septum. Arrow shaft

segments or fibres from the seje palm leaf are worn through the ear lobes. Small sticks are inserted in the lip and nasal peforations, but, as the women get older, these are discarded. Older women wear only single strings around the wrists, ankles, knees, and upper torso, or, like the children, nothing at all.

Other than the social feasts held during the dry season, ceremonies are limited to female puberty rites, purification rites for men who have killed other men in raids, a vision-quest rite to induct shamans, and mortuary feasts during which the pulverized bones of the dead are consumed in a soup made from boiled ripe plantains.

The puberty rite for females and the purification rite for killers are almost identical. The initiate is confined to quarters that are covered over with a specific kind of palm leaf, the cotton garments and cotton possessions belonging to the initiate are discarded and replaced with new ones, special sticks are used to scratch the body and to pick up food, and straws are used to drink water. The shedding of blood, of considerable mythological importance to the Yanomamö in validating their ferocity and warfare, is ceremonially expressed in two of five rites.

The induction of shamans involves drug-taking, fasting and meditation. The candidate is forbidden to walk anywhere except on a set number of paths in and around the village, and he is distinguished in the village by a staff to

11: Chagnon E-5 (1964-1968) 1968 SQ18 Yanoama SQ18

fidelity. Many men, however, show their ferocity by meting out serious punishment to their wives for even minor offenses. It is not uncommon for a man to injure his errant wife seriously; and some men have even killed wives.

Women expect this kind of treatment and many of them measure their husband's concern in terms of the frequency of minor beatings they sustain. I overheard two young women discussing each other's scalp scars. One of them commented that the other's husband must really care for her since he has beaten her on the head so frequently!

A woman usually depends for protection on her brothers, who will defend her against a cruel husband. If a man is too brutal to a wife, her brothers may take the woman away from him and give her to another man. It is largely for this reason that women abhor the possibility of being married off to men in distant villages; they know that their brothers cannot protect them under these circumstances. Women who have married a male cross-cousin have an easier life, for they are related to their husbands by cognatic ties of kinship as well as by marriage. Kaobawä, for example, is related to Bahimi as FaSiSo, and their marital relationship is very tranquil by Yanomamö standards. He does beat Bahimi on occasion, but never cruelly. It is considered good to beat a wife every once in a while just to show your concern for her.

A young man in Monou-teri shot and killed his wife a few years before I conducted my fieldwork. Even while I was there, a man in one of the villages shot his wife in the stomach with a barbed arrow. Considerable internal injury resulted when the arrow was removed. The missionaries had her sent out by airplane to the Territorial capital for surgery. Her wound had gotten infected, and the girl was near death by the time the incident came to their attention. Another man chopped his wife on the arm with a machete; the missionaries in that village feared that the woman would lose the use of her hand because some of the tendons to her fingers were severed. A fight involving a case of infidelity took place in one of the villages just before I left the field. The male culprit was killed in the club fight, and the recalcitrant wife had both her ears cut off by her enraged husband. A number of other women had their ears badly mutilated by angry husbands. The women wear sticks of cane in their pierced ear lobes; these are easily grabbed by the husband. A few men jerked these so hard that they tore their wives' ear lobes open.

It is not difficult to understand, then, why Yanomamö women in general have such a vindictive and caustic attitude toward the external world. By the time a woman is thirty years old she has "lost her shape" and has developed a rather unpleasant disposition. Women tend to seek refuge and consolation in each other's company, sharing their misery with their peers.

A woman gains a measure of respect when she becomes old. By then she has adult children who care for her and treat her kindly. Old women also have a unique position in the world of intervillage warfare and politics. They are immune from the incursions of raiders and can go from one village to another with complete disregard for personal danger. In this connection they are employed as messengers and, on some occasions, as the recoverers of bodies. If a man is killed near the village of an enemy, an old woman from the slain man's village is permitted to recover his body.

Still, the women have one method by which they can exercise a measure of influence over village politics. All women fear being abducted by raiders and always leave the village with this anxiety at the back of their minds. Women always bring their